

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of March 27, 2006**

- I. **ROLL CALL:** Selectboard Chair Donald Wallace, Selectmen Melvin Adams (absent), Michael D. Demasi, Kenneth Johnson, and Roger LeClair. Also present were Town Manager Nanci Allard, Roger Tetreault (Vermont Department of Buildings & General Services), Dave Burley (Vermont Department of Buildings & General Services), David Peebles (Vermont Corrections Department), Merry Kay Shernock, Warren Hagy, Stephen Fitzhugh (Planning Commission), Lonny Wade, Mathew Wade, Chris Wade, and Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann.

Chair Wallace called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. **March 13, 2006 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Selectman LeClair, seconded by Selectman Demasi, to approve the minutes. Selectman Johnson had one correction: under **II. b. Election of Chair**, the last sentence should read "Motion passed 3-1-1, with Selectman Johnson voting in opposition and Chair Wallace abstaining." **Motion to approve amended minutes passed 4-0-0.**

III. **APPROVAL OF BILLS**

- a. **Warrant #19-06.** Motion by Selectman LeClair, seconded by Selectman Johnson, to approve Warrant #19-06 in the amount of \$14,042.46. Selectman Johnson inquired about a payment charged to the Fire Department for "Propane – for Steamer." Manager Allard stated that she would look into this; if this was incorrect, the monies will be charged to the correct department. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

V. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

- a. **Proposed Corrections Work Camp.** Dave Burley (Vermont Department of Buildings & General Services) stated that he was attending tonight's meeting because the Town of Northfield, in response to a November 2005 notice seeking "letters of interest," had indicated its interest in hosting a corrections work camp. He stated that seven (7) other Vermont communities were interested in the proposal. He provided those present with handouts that had information regarding "Siting Criteria" for the project and responses to "Commonly Asked Questions."

Mr. Burley then presented a ten (10) minute video that focused upon the Caledonia County Work Camp located in St. Johnsbury. In the video, St. Johnsbury Town Manager Michael Welch emphasized the very positive impact the work camp had had on his community. The work camp provides helpful assistance to towns, non-profits, etc. in his and in neighboring communities. It was noted that many of the inmates already have needed skills and their services are provided at very low fees. Manager Welch further noted that there had always been good interaction between local governments and those running the facility.

On the video's conclusion, Mr. Burley stated that as the criteria for the project became more defined, he and his colleagues will continue to meet and begin negotiating with the interested communities. The State was now receiving proposals from engineers for the design of the facility. The tentative timetable is for his department to make its recommendation of a location to the State by November 2006 with construction to begin the following summer.

Selectman Demasi asked how many inmates were housing at the Caledonia County facility. He was informed that it was usually around one hundred inmates and the proposed facility would house about the same number. David Peebles (Vermont Corrections Department) recommended that those with questions should contact St. Johnsbury officials for a fuller picture of what it would mean to host such a facility. He further noted the numerous benefits to the host community and pledged that the State would work with local communities to address any concerns.

Chair Wallace expressed his concern that the land involved would be taken off the Town's property tax rolls and would depend upon the State for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) payments at a later date. Mr. Peebles stated that there was no set formula for compensating the community but this would be part of the negotiating process.

Merry Kay Shernock, who is both a town resident (Northfield Falls) and an employee of the Vermont Corrections Department, stated that she was very positive about the program, as the inmates were non-violent offenders and most benefited through the work camp experience. As a taxpayer, however, she would like to see more of the financing details before concluding that this project was a good fit for Northfield.

Selectman Demasi noted that the towns indicating interest were from all over the state. Does the State have a geographic preference? Mr. Burley stated that there were no set criteria at this time but he did note that of the interested towns, Northfield did have the largest population base (123,000) within a twenty-five (25) mile radius. Mr. Peebles concurred that Northfield would be a good location.

Chair Wallace felt that it was wrong that the State was approving engineering plans before a location was selected. He felt that the host community should have some say in the facility's design. Mr. Burley stated that initial plans would be site-neutral and that there would be local input on the final design.

Chair Wallace noted that there was no action required by the Board at this time and thanked Messieurs Burley, Peebles, and Tetreault for attending tonight's meeting and providing more information to the Board and the community.

- b. **Northfield Rapid Response Plan.** Manager Allard stated that the plan distributed to the Board was based upon a new template provided by the State with the local information compiled by Northfield Emergency Management Coordinator William Lyon. Motion by Selectman Demasi, seconded by Selectman Johnson, to approve the Northfield Rapid Response Plan and authorize the Board Chair to sign the signature page. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- c. **Northfield Health & Safety Policy Mission Statement.** Manager Allard reminded the Selectmen that at their February 27, 2006 meeting, they had authorized the Town to participate in the VLCT's 2006 Leader Program, which would provide an opportunity for the Town to earn back up to 4% of its health premiums by encouraging health and safety initiatives amongst its employees. Adopting this mission statement was a prerequisite for the Town's participation in the program. Motion by Selectman Demasi, seconded by Selectman LeClair, to approve and sign the Northfield Health & Safety Policy Mission Statement. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- d. **Status Reports: Various Projects.** Manager Allard had nothing to add.

VI. SELECTBOARD

- a. **Rezoning Approval (Norwich University Request).** The vote on this matter had been postponed from the last regular meeting because there was uncertainty over whether the Planning Commission had formally approved the rezoning. The Planning Commission since have held another meeting (03/20/06) and a formal vote of approval was reflected in the official minutes. At Chair Wallace's request, Planning Commissioner Stephen Fitzhugh briefly summarized Norwich University's request to have a "Recreational A" area rezoned as "Urban Residential" so that future student dormitories could be built there. There was no further discussion. **Motion passed 3-0-1, with Chair Wallace abstaining.**

b. 2006 Liquor License Renewal Applications

1. **Cumberland Farms.** Motion by Selectman LeClair, seconded by Selectman Demasi, to renew Cumberland Farms' second class liquor license. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
2. **Falls General Store (aka MA-GATOR, INC.).** Motion by Selectman LeClair, seconded by Selectman Demasi, to renew the Falls General Store's second class liquor license. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

c. Town Health Officer & Deputy Health Officer Appointments. Motion by Selectman Johnson, seconded by Selectman Demasi, to reappoint Mark Podgwaite as the Town Health Officer and reappoint Betty Podgwaite as the Deputy Health Officer. These are three year appointments. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

d. Town Service Officer Appointment. Motion by Selectman Demasi, seconded by Selectman LeClair, to reappoint Betty Podgwaite as Town Service Officer. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

e. CVSWMD Representative Appointment. Motion by Selectman Johnson, seconded by Selectman LeClair, to reappoint Fred White as Northfield's Representative to the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District. Chair Wallace noted that if anyone would like to serve as the alternate representative, they should contact the Town Manager. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

f. CVRPC Transportation Representative Appointment. Chair Wallace noted that former Selectman Richard Greenslit had volunteered to serve as the alternate representative and attend the monthly meetings but a Selectman had to be appointed as the official Representative. Selectman Johnson volunteered to serve. Motion by Selectman LeClair, seconded by Selectman Demasi, to appoint Kenneth Johnson as Northfield's Representative to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission's Transportation Advisory Committee. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

g. Other Town Officials Appointments (Planning Commission, CVRPC Rep., etc.). The Selectman agreed to approve the remaining appointed positions as a bloc. Motion by Selectman Demasi, seconded by Selectman Johnson, to appoint Richard Greenslit as the CVRPC Transportation Representative (Alternate), to reappoint Stephen Fitzhugh to the Northfield Planning Commission, to appoint David Tucker as the CVRPC Representative, to appoint Nelson Hoffman as the CVRPC Representative (Alternate), to reappoint Jeffrey Shaw as First Constable, to reappoint Russ Barrett as Tree Warden, to reappoint Clark Bothfeld as Fence Viewer, and to reappoint Roger LeClair as Weigher of Coal and Inspector of Wood, Shingles. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

h. Selectboard Committee Appointments. Motion by Selectman Demasi, seconded by Selectman LeClair, to appoint Selectmen Adams and Demasi to serve on the Highway Standards (Paving) Committee; Selectmen Demasi and Wallace to serve on the Inter-Local Agreement Committee; and Selectmen Adams and LeClair to serve on the Joint Management Subcommittee. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

i. Status Reports: Various Projects.

1. **Eight-Month Financial Statements.** Chair Wallace noted that these financials had been in the packets. He was concerned that the amount of revenue for the Highway Department was much lower than would be expected. Manager Allard stated that much of this revenue came through property taxes; since the second installment for payment was due the end of February, these funds may not be reflected in the latest financial statements. She will look into this.

2. **Northfield .gov Domain Name Authorization.** In order to be assigned a .gov domain name for the new municipal website, a letter is required to prove that the requester truly represents a local government. A previous letter signed by the Municipal Manager was initially accepted but it was later decided that a letter from the Board Chairmen would be more appropriate. Motion by Selectmen LeClair, seconded by Selectman Johnson, to authorize Chair Wallace to sign the authorization letter. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
3. **CVSWMD Hazardous Waste Collections.** Chair Wallace noted that the CVSWMD's central depot for collecting hazardous waste has closed so it will be only satellite sites for collection this coming year. There will be collections in Montpelier on April 29 and October 21 and in Barre Town on June 10 and October 14. The time for all is 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and the charge for residential loads is \$10 per car. Businesses need to call ahead and pre-register.
4. **VLCT Selectboard Training.** Chair Wallace reminded the Board that there had been registration forms in the packets for Selectboard Training classes conducted by the Vermont League of Cities & Towns. Those interested should apply as soon as possible.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Non-agenda items.

1. **Lonny Wade.** Mr. Wade stated that he had a number of issues regarding a weekend incident that he wished to address to the Board. He reported that his son had been threatened with a gun by another Northfield resident the past Saturday evening and he was displeased with both the response time and the level of communication he received from the Northfield Police Department. He discussed this matter with Manager Allard this afternoon and she promised to review the situation with the Police Chief and then contact Mr. Wade the next day with an update. This evening he learned from a third-party that the suspect in this matter had been released on bail today. Mr. Wade wanted to know why he was not informed of this beforehand and now is concerned for his family's safety. He wanted to know what the Selectboard would do to rectify this situation. The Selectmen stated that they sympathized with Mr. Wade and his family but there was nothing that they could do at this time due to their total unfamiliarity with the case. After further discussion, it was decided that Manager Allard would look into this matter the next morning and contact Mr. Wade with her findings. Mr. Wade stated that, despite his concerns, he would wait for the Manager's response.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT. Motion by Selectman Demasi, seconded by Selectman Johnson, to adjourn. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

These minutes are subject to approval at the next scheduled meeting.